

BEST PRACTICE CATALOG

Project Title: **JUVENILE DIVERSION PROGRAM**

Function Category: ☐ PATIENT-FOCUSED ☒ ORGANIZATION ☐ STRUCTURES

Subcategory: **Forensic Services**

Heading: **N/A**

Key Word(s): **Juvenile; Child and Adolescent Program**

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Hospital: **Metropolitan State Hospital**

Purpose: To establish a court sanctioned Juvenile Diversion Program for chronic and repeat criminal offenders residing within the Child and Adolescent Program at Metropolitan State Hospital, coordinated through the Metropolitan State Hospital, Hospital Police Department, Program Clinical Staff, Los Angeles County District Attorney, the Juvenile Superior Court and County Probation Departments.

Brief Description: The Diversion Program was established as an administrative procedure to coordinate efforts by the clinical staff and the hospital police to investigate and prosecute reported crimes, offer an alternative to arrest and placement in a juvenile detention facility for reported crimes, and offer clinical options in the treatment of minors. In conjunction with the unit clinical team, hospital police and program director, minors are identified whose degree of aggression has resulted in criminal reports for minor batteries, but have not required law enforcement intervention. These identified minors are placed on an informal diversion program in which they are given a written citation to appear in juvenile court within 60 days from the date of the citation. During this 60 day period, a contract is established with the minor outlining the specific behavior that is needed in order to avoid formal filing of the citation at juvenile court. The criteria is established in collaboration with the treatment team, HPD, parents, and county case workers. During the next 60 days, if the minor meets the criteria established by the team, no charges will be filed with the District Attorney's office. Formal diversion may be instituted by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office for minors who have committed felony crimes but remain at Metropolitan State Hospital for treatment of a mental disorder. The minor must complete all of the requirements of the court diversion program in order to avoid placement in a juvenile detention facility.

Selection Basis/Criteria:

The following items are available regarding this Best Practice:

☐ Photographs ☐ Video Tape ☐ Drawings ☐ Manual
☐ Other : _____

DATE SUBMITTED: **October 13, 1998**